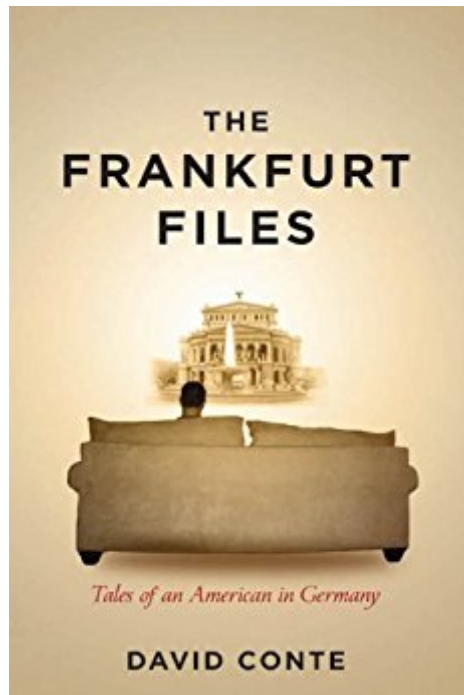




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The Frankfurt Files: Tales Of An American In Germany



Synopsis

Ever hear of a log-sawing ritual at a wedding ceremony? Or renting an apartment with kitchen space, but no kitchen? How about having to bring birthday cake to work on your own birthday? In *The Frankfurt Files: Tales of an American in Germany*, David Conte moves overseas to Frankfurt, Germany, to be with his German girlfriend. But when he later finds himself having to relearn life in a very different way, his storybook romance becomes one big lesson in surviving culture shock: hauling a couch up a flight of stairs by himself after being abandoned by furniture movers; participating in civilized nudity at a wellness center; addressing the all-important issue of cream cheese abuse in German sandwiches. A discerning idealist turned idiot among foreigners, he relates the good, the bad, and the in-between of his offbeat cultural encounters.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

There is not much of interest here.. No mention of the history of Frankfurt or, internationally known Red Light District or the Culture of FKK clubs

I had hoped for an insightful and maybe clever take on German daily life and environs. This was not

that. This was banal, juvenile ramblings, what I would expect from a college kid posting dashed-off blog posts to tolerant and undiscerning friends.

This story is no adventure. It seems more like it is extracts from his diary that he's later gone through and changed some words using a thesaurus. There is no flow to this book. As others have mentioned, he complains a lot in the book, sometimes about Germany and their culture/lifestyle, but in reality, the experiences he's writing about would have also happened in his hometown or if he'd moved to another state and are just part of growing up.

This book could have been both interesting and funny. Sadly it was neither. Most of the experiences related were not related in depth or with much feeling. I am very disappointed with the effort.

This is the perfect book to read for a trip to Germany. Well written, makes you laugh out loud! You will enjoy your trip even more if you read this on the plane on the way there!

I was hoping to read a humorous & warm book but it was the opposite. The author wrote in such a tone that his story came across as rude and obnoxious.

This is a charming collection of short essays - though maybe "essay" is too formal. Each piece is a few pages long, so maybe they're more like vignettes. The author mixes humor with cynicism, and I like his writing style. I also like his choice of words, e.g., the "ignominious photography contest" of which he was the sole participant, in "Horses and Mojitos". Rather than being ordered chronologically, the essays are arranged by theme, though they are presented in such a way that you imagine they might be a good representation of the author's overall attitude over time. They start out harmless and entertaining enough as the author first gets accustomed to living in Germany. While some of the stories keep German culture in the background, other essays are explicitly about some aspect of German culture (e.g., spas). Gradually, as the author begins to air his cultural grievances, you start to feel like he's got some kind of chip on his shoulder, or else he's cranky from being perpetually hungry. Still, he is clearly self-aware, he keeps his sense of humor, and he is sufficiently self-deprecating that you're pretty sure he's not really as big of a jerk as he makes himself out to be. Any American ex-pat who has been frustrated by the ways of his adopted homeland, or who has tried (in vain) to celebrate American holidays while abroad, would find some validation in these pages. In chapter five - aptly titled "Coming to Terms?" - the author seems to be

coming to terms with Germany, and German culture is more center-stage. Here the book has an upswing, and the author is downright happy in chapter six! In chapter seven, the author writes about his first time visiting other European cities, and his excitement is contagious - despite an almost obligatory run-in with petty crime in Italy. (The bureaucratic miracle that follows is enough to restore one's faith in humanity!) These are the stories that fellow travelers to Europe would appreciate. What made this collection particularly delightful was its in-the-background depiction of the author's relationship with his then-girlfriend/now-wife. It's a storybook romance - boy follows girl to Europe, boy and girl make a great team, boy and girl have spats, boy ups his romantic ante, boy and girl live happily ever after. What's not to like?! The only thing missing was photos! I sort of wished I could see some of those horse photos from that ignominious photography contest.

This book is absolutely dreadful and it makes me want to punch David in the face if I ever meet him. Also If he ever got married to the German girlfriend he references disparagingly throughout the book she should divorce him immediately, not just because he is a horrible writer, but because he is a self-centered, ignorant piece of crap with misogynistic tendencies. I live in Frankfurt and thought that I would gain some humorous insights from his book but all he does is reinforce every stereotype about the obnoxious American...and specifically obnoxious American men. Grow up David and get a life. And give up trying to write, especially about other cultures because you should just stay in America, sit in your lazy boy, drink some cheap crappy American beer and watch Fox news like the ignorant American that you are. BTW...I am American living in Frankfurt and trying to understand German culture not criticize it.

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